



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CLASS SPECIFICATION

CLASSIFIED

OCCUPATIONAL/PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

Class No. 004426

■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

Under immediate supervision of a licensed physical or occupational therapist, to assist in providing medically necessary prescribed treatment to patients, and to perform related work.

■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Occupational/Physical Therapist Assistants possess a specialized license issued by the California State Board of Physical or Occupational Therapy. Occupational/Physical Therapist Assistants aid in the provision of physical or occupational therapy under the supervision of a licensed physical or occupational therapist. The Occupational/Physical Therapist Assistant differs from the Occupational/Physical Therapist class in that the latter has more extensive education and is licensed by the state to perform assignments independently.

■ FUNCTIONS

The examples of functions listed in the class specification are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the class. Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such duties are a logical assignment for the position.

Essential Functions:

1. Assists professional therapists in planning and implementing prescribed therapy programs and treatment plans.
2. Transports patients and prepares them for treatments.
3. Observes and records reaction to treatment and physical condition of patients such as temperature, pulse, respiration and color.
4. Cleans and cares for equipment and furnishings and assists in general maintenance of the section or unit.
5. Under the supervision of a licensed therapist, helps maintain client treatment records as well as office records such as billing information and supplies.
6. Provides courteous, high quality service to members of the public by personally responding to requests for service or appropriate referral.

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY OPTION

Essential Functions:

All the functions listed above and

1. Instructs patients in the use of adaptive equipment.
2. Teaches patients to perform activities of daily living such as cooking, cleaning, and dressing using adaptive techniques and equipment appropriate to their diagnosis or disability.

PHYSICAL THERAPY OPTION

Essential Functions:

All the functions listed above and

1. Prepares apparatus or equipment used for individual treatments.

2. Assists with the various physical therapy modalities such as hydrotherapy, electrotherapy, therapeutic exercise, gait training and massage.

■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Knowledge of:

- Human anatomy and physiology, including all systems of the body, with emphasis on musculoskeletal, circulatory and nervous systems.
- Medical diagnosis, treatment methods, and basic conditions related to physical and/or occupational therapy
- Psychology and human relations.
- Relationships of anatomical structures to normal and abnormal movement, including surface anatomy.
- Pathophysiological conditions resulting from injury and disease.
- Psychological reactions to illness and disease.
- Concepts, scope, and function of occupational and/or physical therapy and its relationship to other health professions.
- Professional ethics, conduct, and legal issues applicable to the provision of occupational and/or physical therapy.
- Basic principles and applications of electricity, heat and water when used in therapeutic treatment.
- Basic computer use.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.

Skills and Abilities to:

- Utilize electricity, heat and water in therapeutic applications.
- Apply physical therapy modalities including hot and cold packs, paraffin, whirlpool, and ultrasound as licensing permits.
- Apply basic massage principles.
- Apply the basic principles of ambulation and functional activities to individuals and groups.
- Understand the use of assistive/supportive devices used for transfers and gait training; understand the use of wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, prosthesis, braces, and splints.
- Apply basic principles of therapeutic exercise such as passive range of motion, manual resistive exercise and standardized exercise programs, and the use of exercise equipment for mechanical assistive and resistive exercise with individuals and groups.
- Communicate effectively with a variety of individuals representing diverse cultures and backgrounds and function calmly in stressful situations, which require a high degree of sensitivity, tact and diplomacy.
- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are:

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY OPTION

1. Any combination of education, training and/or experience required to qualify for an Occupational Therapy Assistant certificate with the Occupational Therapy Board of California and obtain a credential as a certified Occupational Therapy Assistant with the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy.

PHYSICAL THERAPY OPTION

1. Any combination of education, training and/or experience required to qualify for a license from the Physical Therapy Board of California.

■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classification. Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.

Must have the ability to move and lift patients. Occasional: sitting, walking, standing, bending of the waist and neck, squatting, twisting of the waist and neck, repetitive hand use, simple and power grasping with each hand including fine manipulation, pushing and pulling with each hand, and reaching above and below shoulder level.

■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

Certification/Registration

Occupational Therapy Option: Possession of a current Occupational Therapy Assistant certificate as issued by the Occupational Therapy Board of California and current registration as a Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant with the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy.

Physical Therapy Option: Possession of a current Physical Therapist Assistant license from the Physical Therapy Board of California OR a current application for a Physical Therapy Assistant license filed with the Physical Therapy Board of California. Applicants who do not currently possess a license must obtain it within six (6) months from time of hire or will be subject to termination from County employment. (16 California Administrative Code, Section 1375.18 adopted 1975); (California Business and Professional Code, Sections 2655-2655.12, 1971).

Working Conditions

Incumbents may occasionally be subjected to violent patients or contagious disease. May work around equipment and machinery such as small power tools and modalities. May be subject to walking on uneven ground and working with biohazards such as bodily fluids.

Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Misdemeanor and/or felony convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a background investigation.

Probationary Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in this class shall serve a probationary period of 12 months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

New: November 20, 2002
Revised/Retitled: April 30, 2004 (From: Physical Therapy Assistant)
Re-titled: August 25, 2005 (From: Rehabilitative Therapist Assistant)
Revised: October 28, 2005 (PT Therapy Option)
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